

## One Year Later

Apache Pilots Back in Iraq with 1st Cav

By Spc. Andy Miller

122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE- The Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 227th

Regiment (Attack Helicopter), "First Attack", are accustomed to hearing about the many firsts of their history. Theirs was the first divisional attack helicopter battalion, the first unit in the Army with the AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters, and the first 1st Cavalry Division element deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). After supporting the coalition during the

initial assault on Baghdad, the 1-227 returned to Fort Hood in May 2003.

Now, they're back.

Things are different for 1-227 now that they've returned. Though still a "combat zone," the conditions have changed for Soldiers supporting OIF II, compared to the initial assault in March last year.

Comforts that First Team Soldiers currently enjoy were only a pipe dream for the 1-227 on their first tour. Base camps, post exchanges, dining facilities and

**"We're well suited for the mission here."**

**-Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shane Colton**

President awards 10 Purple Hearts at Darnall



White House Photo/Eric Draper

**President George Bush presented Purple Heart medals to 10 1st. Cav. Div. Soldiers at Darnall Army Community Hospital April 11. Bush congratulates U.S. Army Pfc. Ismael Torres after the presentation. Story follows on Page 3.**

showers were not available during the initial push into Baghdad.

"Life's not so bad here. We get some mortars here and there, but they're not that effective. There's a chow hall here.

It's not a three MRE (Meal Ready-to-Eat) day, that's a nice thing," Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shane Colton, an AH-64D Apache pilot said. "We've got good flying and good maintenance. There's a chow hall here."

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## EPARS Technology Keeps Soldiers Connected

By Spc. Andy Miller

122nd MPAD

Getting lost is never fun, but getting lost in Baghdad can be dangerous. With the help of 13th Signal Battalion's Enhanced Position Location Reporting System (EPARS), going astray in Baghdad isn't very likely for Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division.

Staff Sgt. Andre Milhouse, the EPARS section sergeant with the 13th Signal Battalion, compared the EPARS to a plugger (military global positioning system). The EPARS, though, has the ability to also act as a tracking device and send text

messages.

"It can hold and send large amounts of data," he said. "EPARS can be used for text messaging, combat messaging and 9-Line MEDEVAC (medical evacuation procedures)."

The ability to transmit text messages throughout the battlefield can be invaluable to units conducting operations far away from Frequency Modulation (FM) signal and retransmission towers. The

FM-based Single-Channel Ground/Air Radio System

**"We give the Soldier on the battlefield a real-time situational awareness"**

**- Staff Sgt. Andre Milhouse**

(SINCGARS) is the Army standard voice communications system, but it has limitations.

SINCGARS is a line-of-site communication system, meaning that

distance or large objects like hills and buildings can interrupt the signal. With EPARS, which is Ultra High Frequency

(UHF)-based, text communications are still available for units that don't have access to the SINCGARS net. The UHF signal can travel up to 100 miles in optimum conditions, and isn't as prone to interference as FM.

"When units venture down into the city, sometimes they don't have the ability to keep up their FM communications," said Spc. Max Clifton, an EPARS network control station operator. "But they are still able to talk to their group and to send messages through the EPARS radio, so it's actually very valuable."

Not only can combat

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# 1-227 Attack Helicopters Intimidate Enemy Skies

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nance. We're well suited for the mission here."

Having already "been there and done that" in Iraq, helped prepare the battalion for their second deployment here. The pilots have already experienced the flying conditions and landscape, and the flight crews understand what it takes to work in the tough Iraqi climate.

"The first time [we were here] Saddam was in power and we thought we were going to get gassed. We were always walking around in MOPP (Mission Oriented Protective Posture) Level 2 and always had a mask with us," Spc. David Boyd, an Apache attack helicopter repair technician said. "We didn't have SAPI (Small Armor Protective Inserts) plates or anything like that."

Though they have better living conditions and are well prepared, the 1-227 does not necessarily have an easier or safer mission now.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

**Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shane Colton performs a pre-flight inspection on an AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter. The Apache Longbow is considered the premier attack helicopter in the U.S. Army's arsenal.**

Camp Cooke endures frequent mortar and rocket attacks. Maintenance and flying operations can be both unpredictable and dangerous.

The battalion is, none-the-

less, an integral part of the division's mission here. Soldiers feel better knowing Apaches are in the skies, Boyd said. The Apaches themselves must seem intimidating to the enemy, who

has no aviation assets.

"It's fast and maneuverable as a dart," Boyd said of his aircraft. "We've got a lot of firepower. The thing is basically a floating tank."

## SAFETY TIP

**Senior occupants will:**

- ▶ Be responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle.
- ▶ Replace drivers who appear fatigued or physically, mentally or emotionally impaired.
- ▶ Ensure that all occupants use available restraint systems.

## Tuesday

High: 87  
Low: 63



## Wednesday

High: 92  
Low: 62



## Thursday

High: 95  
Low: 65



# Professional, Polite & Prepared to Kill



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# President Bush Visits Soldiers at Darnall Hospital

► From Killeen Daily Herald

FORT HOOD, Texas—President Bush and his family stopped in on Sunday to spend a second Easter at this Central Texas post that has played a key role in his Iraq policy.

The first family also paid a quick visit to recovering 1st Cavalry Division troops and their families at Darnall Army Community Hospital and awarded Purple Hearts to 10 of them.

"Fort Hood has made a mighty contribution to freedom in Iraq, security in the country," Bush said. "I value my time with family members of those who have sacrificed on behalf of the country and today I ask for God's blessing for troops overseas."

Speaking from the home of the 4th Infantry, which captured ousted Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, Bush was firm in his praise for the Fort Hood troops who are currently there, including the 18,000

from the 1st Cavalry, 13th Corps Support Command and III Corps.

"Our troops are taking care of business," Bush said. "They are doing a great job."

The normally small congregation at the 13th Corps Support Command's chapel found its pews filled with the post's top brass, White House staffers and media and Secret Service for the Episcopal Easter worship led by chaplain, Maj. David Scheider.

Bush said he could not predict if the current violence would ease in Iraq.

"It was a tough week last week and my prayers and thoughts are with those who pay the ultimate price for our security," Bush said. "Every day I pray there's less casualties, but I know what we're doing in Iraq is right."

Bush, the first lady and his parents went on to Darnall where they met with 11 soldiers who arrived Friday from Iraq after being wounded during a fierce firefight April 4 in



**President George Bush and his wife Laura greet members of the Fort Hood community April 11**

Sadr City, a Baghdad suburb. The clash, which at the time was the worst of the post-war era, killed seven of the division's soldiers and wounded 41. Another 1st Cavalry soldier was killed April 6 in Ashula.

The week's losses bring to at least 63 the number of Fort Hood troops lost in Iraq since Fort Hood began its

involvement there in January 2003. Another two area civilians have been killed in Iraq and a warrant officer also died last year while deployed to Kuwait.

Leaving Darnall, Bush shook the hand of Col. Bernard DeKoning, the hospital's commander. He did not comment further before his motorcade returned to III Corps' helicopter pad. From there, his helicopter entourage took off for the 50-mile return flight north to his ranch in Crawford.

"These are brave troops and they are doing an outstanding job for their country," said McClellan, as he briefed reporters before the departure.

Bush has made three trips to Fort Hood. His Easter visit last year came a day after two 1st Cavalry aviators were returned to the post after spending 21 days in captivity after their Apache helicopter gunship went down during the U.S.-led push into Baghdad.

## Today in Cav History

In the final push to Tikrit, the Marines 1st Expeditionary Force found the two POW Apache helicopter pilots from the 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Chief Warrant Officer David S. Williams, 30, of Orlando, Fla. and Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Young Jr., 26, of Lithia Springs, Ga., who had been forced down and captured March 24 during heavy fighting.

## Today in History April 13

► From [historychannel.com](http://historychannel.com)

1861 Fort Sumter surrenders  
1866 Butch Cassidy is born  
1939 USS Astoria attempts pre-war reconnaissance  
1941 Japan and USSR sign nonaggression pact  
1970 Apollo 13 Oxygen tank explodes  
1972 North Vietnamese launch major attack on An Loc  
1990 Soviet Union admit to Katyn Massacre

## EPARS Warns of IEDs, Danger

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groups maintain communication with one another while on the battlefield, but they can also communicate back and forth with their command in the rear.

The EPARS system can also serve as a tracking device, and an early warning system for troops in the field. For instance, if an improvised explosive device (IED) is found in an area of operations, a message with its location is sent to the rear. The rear then inputs the location of the IED into the EPARS system. Then,

when a Soldier conducting field operations moves into the vicinity of that IED, the EPARS will automatically send out an alarm, which audibly warns the soldier. The system will even provide Soldiers with the safest route out of the hazardous area.

New technology, like the EPARS system, can give the 1st Cavalry Division the edge on any battlefield.

"We give the [Soldier on the] battlefield [a] real-time situational awareness," Milhouse said.



# Drop Me A Line: Fishing Makes for Free Time Fun

By Spc. Bryan Kinkade  
1CD Public Affairs Office

"It's hard trying to figure out what they want," Sgt. Chris DePrater said, as he watched fish swim past his hook and bait in the shallow edge of the lake, not wanting to bite.

Using hot dogs, corn, bread, or whatever he can get, DePrater, a 29-year-old switching systems operator with the 13<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, spends his spare time throwing hooks and bait in a man-made lake on Camp Victory.

"We've caught some carp, bass, and no one has been able to figure out what the third one is," he said. "I also caught a turtle once. That was pretty weird."

DePrater said he usually throws the fish back in the lake, but sometimes he will give them to the Kellogg

Brown and Root contractors so they can have a fish barbecue.

DePrater once won the "Biggest Bass" prize at a local base fishing tournament in 1993. He wants to continue to enter competitions whenever he can. He even sends photos of the fish he catches to fishing magazines.

"We're trying to get the [camp] mayor's cell to sponsor a fishing tournament," he said, hopefully. "Maybe MWR [Morale, Welfare and Recreation] will get one going."

But most of all, DePrater likes to fish. When he goes back home to Valley View, Texas, where his parents live off of Ray Roberts Lake, that's probably where you'll find him: at a favorite fishing hole.

"It's very relaxing to be able to get away," DePrater said.



By Spc. Bryan Kinkade, 1CD Public Affairs Office

**Sgt. Chris DePrater brings in a two-pound fish from the man-made lake which divides Camp Victory.**

## TV GUIDE

	AFN ATLANTIC	AFN PACIFIC	AFN Sports	AFN Spectrum
<b>18:00</b>	Lizzie McGuire/ The Amanda Show	Tonight Show/ The Late Show 18:30	Sports Special	Cinema Secrets/ Ebert & Roeper At The Movies
<b>19:00</b>	Jeopardy/ Headline News	Access Hollywood 19:30	Sportscenter	The Wild Thornberrys/ The Fairly Oddparents
<b>20:00</b>	ESPNews/ Headline News	The Wizard of Oz	ESPNews/ Baseball Tonight	The Simpsons/ The Cosby Show
<b>21:00</b>	7th Heaven		SportsCenter	Monk
<b>22:00</b>	Battlestar Galactica	Operation Dumbo Drop	MLB - Kansas City Royals @ Chicago White Sox	The Practice

## Scores



## MLB:

**American League**  
Cleveland 6  
Minnesota 3

**National League**  
Cincinnati 4  
Philadelphia 1

NY Mets 10  
Atlanta 6

Pittsburgh 13  
Chicago Cubs 2

San Francisco 7  
Milwaukee 5

Colorado 7  
Arizona 4